

Rep. Ed Murray • 43rd District

■ The best health care

We need more affordable health coverage for all citizens. Two issues will likely dominate the session: patient safety and prescription medicines.

Patient safety

The best way to lower rates for doctors — and protect patients from needless injuries and deaths — is a package of reforms that focuses on preventing medical errors in the first place. The wrong answer is to take away your right to a jury trial, which hasn't helped doctors in Texas or Florida.



Cheaper medicines from Canada

Other states and cities are saving taxpayers huge amounts of money by re-importing prescription medicines from Canada. This reform can save money – and lives.

■ Civil rights

For the first time in over a decade, the House passed a bill ending legal discrimination in employment for gays and lesbians. The Senate refused to allow a vote on this bill.

There's no good reason to legitimize discrimination by allowing employers or the government to snoop inside your bedrooms. This is one of the last forms of legal discrimination, and I'll keep pushing to pass this legislation, and other reforms, to protect your rights to privacy and equality.

Keeping in Touch

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Ed Murray
43rd District**
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**2004
Session
Report**



Representative

Ed Murray

43rd District

2004 Session Report

Dear neighbors,

This is a pivotal time in our state's history.

They politics of "no" have won the day for too long. It's time to get things done for the people of Washington state.

We're competing with corporations around the world. Good enough isn't good enough. In this race, coming in second place doesn't mean a silver medal; it means pink slips.

True prosperity for all our families won't come unless we fight to be the best. That means pushing hard so every citizen, not just the wealthy elite, has access to:

- the best education;
- the best jobs;
- the best transportation system; and
- the best health care.

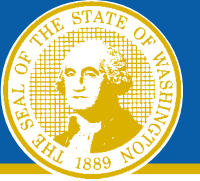
Some of the smartest and most innovative people in the world live right here. If we work together, we can break through political gridlock and give all citizens a better tomorrow. That includes making progress on civil rights so no citizen faces legal discrimination.

This newsletter is meant to lay out the problems we all face and a strong program of reform. Details change quickly during a short session of the Legislature, so whenever you're curious about an issue or bill, I encourage you to check www.leg.wa.gov or contact my office. After the session ends, I'll send a newsletter explaining what happened to major pieces of legislation and the budget.

As always, I want to hear from you. What do you think? I'd like to hear your ideas and your family's experiences with education, jobs, traffic and health care. I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

REP. ED MURRAY • 43rd District



■ A strong vision for the future

In the history of our state, the foundation for prosperity came not when times were good, but when we worked together and sacrificed during our darkest hours.

Our state's great dams and public buildings were built during the Great Depression as a way to create jobs.

Boeing grew into the world's leader in airplanes because thousands of our state's women picked up riveters and built the fighters and bombers that won World War II. Our entrepreneurs risked it all to create Microsoft, Amazon.com, Starbucks and Costco – all companies sitting on top of the world.

We can't rest on those successes. For every Boeing there's an Airbus – all of our world-leading companies have dozens of competitors pushing to take the throne and all the good jobs that go with being No. 1.

Restoring prosperity in our state and giving our children a better future means having a strong vision for a better tomorrow. The pieces have to fit together.

- *Education and jobs* — It starts with having a great education, which opens the door to that high-skill, high-wage job. The kind of job with benefits you can raise a family on, like health coverage and a pension.
- *Transportation* — Once you have that job, you don't want to spend hours each day getting to work and back, stuck in the car when I-5 turns into a parking lot. Businesses need to get goods to market and citizens need a choice of how to get to work.
- *Health care* — And when you retire, you need affordable prescription medicines and a way to get around town when you don't drive.

■ The best transportation

Last year, we ended 13 years of gridlock to pass strong transportation reforms and a real transportation plan.

I'm proud of sponsoring that legislation and working with citizens to make it law. Here are the details:

- The first real transportation spending in 13 years (\$4.2 billion) and the largest transportation package in 30 years.
- Reforms to make transportation more efficient and accountable.
- Restoring passenger ferry service.
- Refitting school buses to cut pollution and improve public health, especially for school children.
- Getting cars off the road with more park and rides and the Commute Trip Reduction Program.
- Selecting projects not by politics but by which ones improve safety and relieve congestion.
- Funding to start replacing the Alaska Way Viaduct.

A regional system that works

We need to build on that success and continue the fight to unclog traffic. That's why I'm introducing two strong reform bills:

Build a common vision

We're struggling to find a consensus on transportation. One problem is the myriad of agencies each working on separate plans. It's too complex. Citizens have a right to know where we're heading, who's in charge of what and who's accountable when things go wrong.

I've introduced legislation to do that. Here's what the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* had to say about it: "Transportation Committee Chairman Rep. Ed Murray, D-43rd District, is on target in pressing the discussion on governance. Accountability means that, in exchange for their taxes, voters understand who's in charge and that whoever is in charge is penalized for failure and rewarded for success."

A regional plan that works

King, Pierce and Snohomish counties are supposed to put a regional transportation plan on the ballot, but it's stuck in the mud because the legislation is flawed: it forces the plan to be roads-heavy and funded by sales tax, both ideas voters say they'll reject.

The *P-I* agrees: "The Regional Transportation Investment District is about to fail too if the Legislature doesn't amend the scheme and the locals can't agree on what to build."

The reform I'm proposing lets us create a balanced plan that voters will support, with user fees instead of taxes and more local control so we can decide what's best for our communities.

Green is good

The most expensive way to deal with traffic is only adding more highway lanes. It's also worst of all for pollution, safety and growth.

Green options are cheaper and more effective, so I made sure the legislature's 2003 Transportation Plan funds them. Carpools, vanpools, buses, trains, walking, biking – all move more people for less money and less pollution.

I also stopped the expensive and destructive expansion of I-5 through downtown Seattle and Highway 520 through Montlake.

Lawmakers need to hear from citizens that this issue is important, so I encourage you to stand up and speak out on this issue.

Ferries

Many of you rely on ferries, and the ferry system has struggled with budget problems for years.

I'm pushing to protect — or even improve — service between Vashon Island and Seattle.

We also need innovative solutions for Bremerton's passenger-only service, better maintenance of the ferry fleet and a solution to the problem of unfunded mandates about security against terrorism.



Local projects

The Alaskan Way Viaduct may not survive another earthquake and is a real safety threat to Seattle's citizens. We must replace it.

The Highway 520 bridge could also collapse in the next quake. We need a reasonable plan that doesn't dump more traffic into local streets near the bridge.

Last year's transportation plan includes funding for walls to protect our neighborhoods from highway noise; we need to keep making progress on this issue.

■ The best education

Education is the paramount duty of the state, and if we're going to have the best jobs, we need to win the brainpower race.

Education for all, not for some

Where a child lives, what color their skin is and how much their parents make – none of that should make a difference. Every child deserves a world-class education.

- Out of ten children who enter kindergarten, only two graduate from college.
- One out of three high school students drop out.
- Half of all college freshmen don't get their degree, often because of financial problems.
- In 2008, the state's largest class of high school students will knock on our college doors, and we'll turn them away unless we create 30,000 more seats in lecture halls and labs. It's wrong to tell an entire generation they won't have the chance to earn a college degree, the surest ticket to the American Dream.

Our goal should be to have the best graduation rates in the nation for high schools and colleges.



■ The best jobs

The right skills for the best jobs

Microsoft is hiring thousands of new workers for high-skill, high-pay jobs – but they're only hiring a few local workers. Why? Our universities don't produce enough high-tech graduates.

We need to beef up our universities in high-demand fields like engineering, computers, biotech and health care so our citizens get the highest-paying jobs instead of the leftovers.

Telling the truth about our state

This is a great place to do business. You wouldn't know that if you listened to some politicians.

Independent experts recently rated Seattle as the No. 1 place in the nation for business climate and Washington state No. 8 for small businesses.

If we're going to create jobs and recover from this downturn, we need to promote our state, not scare business away.